

MINUTES OF LOW MOOR ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING, 6.12.2016 HELD AT  
WELLINGTON INN , ALMA TERRACE

1. PRESENT : Angela Johnson, Helen Balawajder, Chris Glasper, Joe Lyons, Lindsay Maxwell, Darren Lovatt ( Allotment Officer)

.APOLOGIES : received from Simon Wild, Christine Robertson , Lucy Wild , Tess McMahon, PCSO Cockerill

Tess, in giving her apologies also explained that she is resigning from Committee as she is moving back to Settle. Angela will send a thank you for her work on Committee.

It was agreed that we should proactively look for new members to bring on to Committee. Helen will mail round to tenants and all current members should look for potential new recruits.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING ( 1.10.2016) were agreed as accurate.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- a) Picnic Table – this was now in place, thanks to Lucy's transport. Angela will contact close neighbours to ask that they inform if an anti-social presence develops.
- b) Clarification for PCSOs that incident involving Mick Burns was reported to Police and meeting held with an officer.
- c) Footpath Repair Work – now completed. Thanks to Chris for his regular support at the work sessions and to Darren for his co-ordination of the work.
- d) End of Year Newsletter – Helen reported it as being more difficult as there was a need for chasing up of promised articles. Angela will print off 2 copies for display on notice boards.
- e) Shop Roof - Chris had not got any other quote other than the fibre glass alternative which had been approx £7000. It was suggested that other approaches be investigated eg felting, and quotes, together with expected life expectancy, be brought to next meeting. Likely timescale and type of repair to be agreed then. Angela will contact plot holder on 107 ( works in building trade ) ; other committee members to approach any possible contacts they have.

4. ALLOTMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

- a) Tree Survey – had been done . Information now to be downloaded on to tree survey package and prepared as a report. Cost for survey being met out of Council Allotment budget – a trial that may well be extended to all sites.
- b) Apiary – Consultation had taken place with neighbouring tenants to Plot 37. Darren and Chris are meeting local Beekeepers' Association, who are being asked to submit an application for Ward Funding ( £1100 – 1200). Educational provision will enable links with local schools and community groups and a possible Junior Beekeeping Scheme will be managed by Local Association of Beekeepers or Low Moor Beekeepers. Future development of Plot 37 will take place in Spring – strimming and removing of rubbish ( use of Community Payback) and levelling of plot, preparatory to re-development.
- c) Eviction Letter – None issued since previous. Warnings will now be issued to plot holders likely to be evicted prior to letter arriving ( as described by Site Secs in their report). Content of letter more customer friendly and including a right of appeal.
- d) Winter Skip – now likely to be Jan / Feb . Site Secs requested to contact ( before end of March) to agree a date
- e) Plot 144 hedge – now reduced significantly – much approval voiced at the meeting.
- f) Tree felling likely to take place in Jan. Choice of tree to be partly dependant upon tree

survey.

- g) Clarification given that it was possible for tenants to have first option on a second plot where numerically closest and available

#### 5. SITE SECRETARIES' REPORT – received from Christine and attached. Highlighted points included

- a) Dual role of Christine and Lucy working well
- b) 43 plots let in 2016, ( 16 since October) but further additions to Waiting List. [\some](#) vacant plots remaining to let.
- c) Council request 144 be left untenanted so available for tree work.
- d) Council operated listing appears to be working OK but still work for Site Secs in monitoring plots “ in process”.
- e) Site Sec has completed full site survey and has identified plots where tenants will be warned about work needed over winter period.

#### 6. PCSO REPORT – None available

#### 7. FINANCE

- a) Change of signatories – Need to remove 3 now ineligible signatories ( Jeanne Murphy, Mandy Waggett and Penny Davies ) and add some new ones. Lindsay Maxwell, Helen Balawajder and Joe Lyons indicated a readiness to be signatories. Committee agreed to the removal of the 3 signatories no longer on Committee and to add Helen, Lindsay and Joe as new signatories. Angela requested that Lindsay, Helen and Joe mail to her their address details and then Angela will complete the mandate applicable to the 2 accounts involved ( for shop and association) and circulate to new potential signatories for the completion of their details and signatures.
- b) Angela also highlighted that she plans to resign as Treasurer at AGM and it will be useful to work alongside a prospective new Treasurer in first 6 months of 2017. Possible candidates to be Treasurer please contact Angela.
- c) Account balances
  - i) Association Account - £700 grant received to fund Pathway Repairs and % of membership subscriptions transferred from Shop Account ( £207). Expenditure of £61.83 on refreshments for the work sessions and £31.99 for admin costs. Projected year end figures approx £790. (\* I re-calculated from what I said at the meeting )
  - ii) Shop Account – Current balance £ 8216 ( end of Oct) Takings total ( excluding memberships) appears to be approx £10,500; Total discounts paid to shop helpers £94.92
- d) Financial Management Systems in place regarding Shop. Angela and Chris explained the roles that are currently being taken on and the small change that was being now effected, whereby Chris, as shop keeper, will take week's takings out of the till, leaving Angela a copy of the till receipts and the cash to pay into the bank. Angela then enters data on her spreadsheet and tallies monthly bank statements. Dual system of recording shop expenditure in place with Chris & Kerry and Treasurer maintaining records.
- e) Proposed New Audit Arrangements – Angela is recommending that we seek an independent examination of finances. ( Thanks to Adam for his past services) She has spoken with Outsource, who offer an appropriate service for £75. Darren will forward details of other Allotment Sites who obtain an independent audit.

#### 8. SHOP

- a) Rota 2017 – 3 / 4 new volunteers needed in order to make the rota viable. Helen will add this into the appeal for help.
- b) Chris is organising an end of year thank you for shop helpers. He will check on their

- continuing availability for 2017 and let Angela know names of those for Rota ( preferred day and any long periods of unavailability
- c) Winter Clean – Chris is proposing that this year he obtains the help of Nigel, a known contact, to assist in the hard work of clearing and cleaning the shop. A budget price of £150 was agreed ( part of shop admin costs ). Further help of volunteers may not be needed but calling upon any volunteers to work alongside in any cleaning sessions organised could be an option.
  - d) Bagging of Potatoes and Onions – Helen will circulate Committee and Shop helpers to see who might be available to help when exact dates of “Bagging sessions” were fixed.
  - e) Potatoes and onions due Late Jan. Seed order being prepared. It is proposed to continue the current practice of pricing the seeds, using the discounted prices available to give 25% reduction on shop prices for shop customers.
  - f) Chris is considering whether to call on extra volunteer help for pricing up goods. He will report to Committee his overall policy / percentage of mark up re determining pricing of goods.

#### 9. CONSULTATIONS RE COUNCIL FUNDING FUTURE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

Committee members who had attended the first round of meetings reported their overall impressions and discussions that had taken place. Second round of meetings due this week. Darren reported that , as expected, attendance at these was likely to be less than previous. Darren indicated that his preference was for the Allotments to be managed outside the Council in order to be free from in-house tendering requirements, which he feels would enable reductions in the costs of services to be achieved whilst maintaining a management structure similar to the present. The overall executive “ Trust” would be of volunteers.

#### 10. ACTIVITIES

Angela counselled that we be careful that we keep our ideas within manageable proportions given the lack of tenant volunteer involvement in recent past.

- a) Hedging – Alongside Christine’s previous suggestion and quote from TCV , Angela had spoken with Jonathan Dent of St Nicks. A day training course would cost £200. Would we get enough volunteers ready to do the course and be available to work on the hedging afterwards? Helen will sound out support from membership. Darren will send Angela contact details of Willie Hoedemann, Scarcroft Allotments, who obtained hedging done by students and staff at Askham Bryan College. Next meeting to decide further
- b) Support for inexperienced new tenants – It was agreed for a 1- 1 mentoring system and Helen will seek possible mentors from more experienced gardeners. Site Secs are obtaining names of potential new Learner tenants
- c) Tree Policy – to be discussed after survey available

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – None

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING : SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY AT 12 NOON IN WELLINGTON INN ( Room booked )